

Fight Fascism – Build Socialism!

MAXINE WILLIAMS

2pm 11 September

Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1
(nearest tube Holborn)

Entrance £1 waged, 50p unwaged.

There are big debates today about the correct way to fight fascism. Should there be a broad front? Should the BNP be subjected to a media ban? Should the struggle focus on the basis of racism – imperialism, the state and its supporters? Big questions and growing bigger as the fascist parties make electoral and political gains in European countries.

But they are not new questions. The world has faced the fascist menace before. To decide on how to fight fascism today we must see if any lessons can be drawn from the past.

The growth of fascism in the 1920s and 30s was directly related to the crisis faced by big business. It could solve that crisis only at the expense of the working class: by forcing down wages, by forcing women out of the job market and into the home, by attacking oppressed sections, and by using state funds to rescue businesses. To inflict such suffering on the population required that the working class and its organisations be defeated. Both Mussolini and Hitler undertook this task with the backing of big business, which did very well out of fascism.

At the same time, fascism has a nationalistic, racist and war-like character. Both fascism and war 'grow out of the same dunghheap ... the monstrous products of capitalism in decline.' It was not enough to defeat the working class, it was necessary to fight other nations to win their colonies and spheres of influence. Both Germany and Italy were hungry for empires. In neither country did existing

'respectable' parties put up any serious struggle against fascism.

Nor will the Labour Party, Liberals or Tories do so today. The dangers are very real. Fascist and racist attacks are growing, especially in London's East End where the BNP got thousands of votes in recent elections.

Again capitalism faces a serious and prolonged crisis of profitability. Again they are seeking to impose cuts on the working class. Again the big powers are flexing their muscles over international trade. As long as capitalism exists so too will these dangers.

For communists the fight against fascism is also a fight to destroy the system which produces it. It is a fight for the rights of the working class, it is a fight for the right of self defence for those who suffer racist attacks, not just from the fascists but from the police and the immigration authorities. It is a fight for socialism.

Read: 'Fighting Racism: Which way are we marching?' in FRFI 116, 'Fascism: monstrous product of capitalism' and 'Racism in the East End' in FRFI 118, and *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* 119.

COMMUNIST FORUMS IN LONDON

A new series of public discussions of communist politics introduced by members of the *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* Editorial Board.

11 September	Fight Fascism – Build Socialism!	Maxine Williams
9 October	Why the Labour Movement won't Fight	Robert Clough
13 November	Capitalist Law and Order: Taking Liberties	Carol Brickley
11 December	Their Profit – Our Loss: The Multinationals against Humanity	Trevor Rayne

All forums are at the same venue and time. (Assistance with childcare available on application)

I would like to come to the Communist Forum on ____ I need childcare provision (details) _____

I would like to take out a subscription to *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* (£4.50 for 6 issues, £8.00 for 12 issues payable to Larkin Publications) _____

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

For further information: Forums, c/o FRFI, BCM Box 5909, London WC1N 3XX.